

Fairfax Center Area – Draft Vision and Guiding Principles

As revised by the Fairfax Center Area Phase II Working Group – 9/29/2015

CONCEPT FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The planning guidance provided by the Concept for Future Development is one of the principal elements used in formulating Area Plan recommendations. The Concept and its associated land use guidance recommend the predominant use and character envisioned for land areas within each Planning District although within the planning districts, there may be land areas planned for a distinctly different land use than that envisioned by the Concept.

In the context of the Concept, the Fairfax Center Area is classified as a Suburban Center surrounded by Suburban Neighborhoods at its periphery except for the area north of the Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway /I-66 interchange (in Land Unit C) and the southernmost portion of Land Unit V, which are classified as Low Density Residential Areas. (See Figure 2.) The Suburban Center is envisioned as a premiere place to live, work, and play, with the greatest intensity focused around a central mixed use core area. ~~categorization emphasizes a mix of uses with the primary focus on employment and higher density residential uses; t~~The Suburban Neighborhood categorization emphasizes a range of residential uses as well as neighborhood-serving commercial uses; and the Low Density Residential categorization emphasizes typical residential densities of .1-.2 dwelling unit per acre and includes the county's ecologically significant areas. This very low density pattern provides reasonable use of the property and serves as a land use Best Management Practice (BMP) to manage, in conjunction with stormwater management facilities (structural BMPs), the quality of water which ultimately enters into the Occoquan Reservoir and the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to water quality benefits, very low density residential development preserves large lot development opportunities and assures compatibility with the character of the existing residential development. Both the Occoquan and Difficult Run EQCs contain environmentally sensitive natural and cultural resources necessitating strong protection measures.

GUIDING PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The specific guiding principles that provide an overall framework for achieving this vision for the Fairfax Center Area include:

Identify and develop a central focal point within the area of the Government Center, with a network of additional activity nodes throughout the area to serve local residents.

Focus the most intense redevelopment near planned Metrorail/BRT stops and create a safe, convenient, and walkable environment.

Promote high-quality urban design, to include building design and streetscape amenities, that contributes to the overall vision of the Fairfax Center Area.

Provide opportunities for infill development that can support the creation of additional activity nodes that include residential, retail, office, hotel, and/or civic uses.

Improve the multimodal connectivity of the area by connecting and enhancing existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as providing increased transit access.

Ensure that the transportation network supports current and future travel demands.

Provide opportunities for residents to age in place through the development of senior housing such as independent living or assisted living facilities.

Provide recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities.

Promote the health of stream valleys and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Preserve and protect stable residential neighborhoods along the periphery of and surrounding the Fairfax Center Area through screening, buffering, and tapering of development at the transitional boundaries.

Develop an implementation strategy that provides the resources, flexibility, and accountability necessary to achieve the overall vision.

